

# **University of South Carolina Salkehatchie**

## **Summary Report on Institutional Effectiveness**

### **Fiscal Year 2005-2006**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2006, public institutions of higher education in South Carolina must report on Majors and Concentrations, General Education, and Success of Transfer Students. As a 2-year campus, the University of South Carolina Salkehatchie campus does not have Majors and Concentrations and does not receive Transfer Students. Therefore, this report is restricted to General Education.

## **GENERAL EDUCATION**

As indicated in the institution's Mission Statement, "Salkehatchie offers associate in arts and associate in science degree programs, and its primary purpose is to provide the first two years of a university education, offering USC Columbia courses taught by USC approved faculty." By definition, General Education is a set of skills and a collection of knowledge in different content areas. To meet these criteria, "USC Salkehatchie requires its graduates to possess oral and written communication, critical thinking, and computational skills. In addition, its graduates must have grounding in the liberal arts through the acquisition of knowledge in the following areas: humanities or fine arts, social or behavioral sciences, and natural sciences or mathematics."

## **Skills Indicators**

### **Oral and Written Communication**

- Orally communicate clearly and effectively.
- Write compositions that are sufficiently coherent, unified, and developed.
- Write prose that is clear, understandable, and free from such errors in grammar and mechanics as would obstruct reader comprehension.
- Have knowledge of library research methods and mechanics.
- Read with understanding.

### **Computational and Numerical Skills**

- Make good consumer decisions.
- Read and interpret mathematical information contained in newspapers and magazines.
- Demonstrate calculator competency.
- Solve problems using the basic properties and operations of mathematics.

- Demonstrate computer competency.

### **Critical Thinking**

- Use inductive and deductive reasoning to draw conclusions.
- Recognize bias in reasoning.
- Recognize inconsistencies in reasoning.

## **Content Area Indicators**

### **Humanities**

- Understand the basic elements of fiction, poetry, and drama.
- Analyze works of literature in the three major genres of fiction, poetry, and drama.

### **Natural Sciences**

- Understand the scientific method.
- Understand the application of scientific principles to daily life.

### **Social and Behavioral Sciences**

- Understand and critically analyze the behavior of individuals, groups and institutions in society.
- Understand the cultural, political, economic, or social contexts and developments that shape people's lives.

## **Assessment Methods**

USC Salkehatchie uses annual teaching evaluations, annual student satisfaction surveys, and bi-annual alumni surveys to track the effectiveness of General Education. All surveys include components to aid the institution in its measurement of success in delivering General Education. Moreover, each relevant office studies the results of the surveys to determine if changes are necessary.

## **Assessment Results**

By the requirements of the awarding of an associate's degree, students must take and successfully complete six hours of English. Therefore, if the student satisfies this requirement then they have acquired the written communication skills appropriate for General Education. Additionally, the vast majority of our students complete a course in Speech thus satisfying oral communications requirements. Students must also successfully complete requirements in mathematics, natural science, and social/behavioral sciences. Again, the

successful completion of these requirements implies that the students have acquired the skills appropriate for General Education.

The questions in the annual student satisfaction surveys that apply to General Education are as follows:

1. I am satisfied with the extent of my intellectual development since enrolling at Salkehatchie.
2. My academic experience at Salkehatchie has had a positive influence on my intellectual growth and interest in ideas.
3. Most of my courses this year have been intellectually stimulating.
4. I am more likely to attend a cultural event (for example, a concert, lecture, or art show) now than I was before coming to Salkehatchie.

In the most recent survey (2004), 77% of the students surveyed responded with 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to the above statements. Questions 1-3 above resulted in the strongest positive results (86%) while question 4 was weaker (52%). In consideration of this, Salkehatchie has taken positive steps to bring cultural events to the campuses in Allendale and Walterboro.

The questions in the bi-annual Alumni Survey that are applicable to General Education are as follows:

1. Indicate your satisfaction with your general education program of study.
2. Indicate your satisfaction with instruction in your general education program.
3. Indicate your overall academic experience satisfaction.

In the 2005 survey, 92% of the respondents indicated they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their general education experience in their answers to the three questions.

### **Use of Assessment Findings**

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie campus is proactive in meeting the needs of the students in regards to General Education. One of the reactions to student surveys has been advisors stressing college orientation courses such as University 101 to students. Courses such as this one facilitate student immersion into the collegiate atmosphere and introduce them to critical thinking. As mentioned earlier, the campus has also realized the importance of cultural events and has taken steps to offer more to its students. The campus operates the Opportunity Scholars Program (OSP), which, among numerous other activities, strives to increase student cultural awareness. Some examples of activities carried out during the past four years are:

- February 27, 2003: Speaker on China sponsored by OSP

- April, 2003: OSP trip to the Koger Center (Columbia, SC) to watch Shakespeare's *As You Like It*
- March 6-9, 2004: OSP trip to Washington, DC
- August 22-26, 2005: International Festival sponsored on campus
- February 22, 2005: Tuskegee Airmen speak for OSP sponsored Black History event
- October 5, 2005: OSP sponsored Brain Bowl

Although developmental/remedial courses have been removed from the curriculum, the above mentioned Opportunity Scholars Program has helped supplement these losses for students in need. The program offers counseling, tutoring, and career guidance services. In the broader view, the campus offers small class sizes, which allows for more one-on-one interaction with the faculty.

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie campus has and will continue to emphasize General Education as a prime focus of its mission.